

We claim:

1 1. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a
2 subject, the system comprising an interaction controller configured to
3 generate materials on the subject to communicate to one or more users for the one
4 or more users to work on the subject;
5 set a duration of time for users to communicate;
6 start a dialogue session for users to communicate in an area related to the subject;
7 and
8 stop the dialogue session approximately at or before the end of the duration of
9 time.

1 2. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 1 wherein the
2 interaction controller monitors at least one user's inputs to the system.

1 3. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 1 further comprising
2 one or more interactive devices, with each interactive device configured for a user to
3 receive information from, and enter information into, the system.

1 4. A computer-aided group-learning method for more than one user to work on a
2 subject, the method comprising the steps of:
3 generating materials on the subject to communicate to one or more users for the
4 one or more users to work on the subject;
5 setting a duration of time for users to communicate among themselves;
6 starting a dialogue session for users to communicate in an area related to the
7 subject; and
8 stopping the dialogue session approximately at or before the end of the duration of
9 time.

1 5. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 further comprising
2 the step of monitoring at least one user's inputs while working on the subject.

1 6. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 further comprising
2 the step of tailoring the materials generated for at least one user to that user.

1 7. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 5 further comprising
2 the step of guiding the users' communication in the dialogue session back to the subject
3 when one or more users have been distracted from the subject for a duration of time.

1 8. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 wherein the mode
2 of communication can be selected from a unicast, multicast and broadcast mode.

1 9. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 further comprising
2 the step of producing an answer to respond to a user's question.

1 10. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 further comprising
2 the step of generating materials for a user to individually work on the subject.

1 11. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 wherein the
2 materials to be presented to at least one user can be in one or more formats to be selected
3 by the user.

1 12. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 4 further comprising
2 the step of restricting one user from communicating with any other users.

1 13. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 wherein the users
2 communicate orally.

1 24. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 19 wherein the
2 analysis includes analyzing the frequency of the user's inputs.

1 25. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 22 wherein the
2 analysis includes generating a dictionary of words based on the inputs of one or more
3 other users.

1 26. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a
2 subject, the system comprising:
3 an interaction controller configured to
4 generate materials on the subject to communicate to one or more users for
5 the one or more users to work on the subject;
6 set a duration of time for users to communicate in a dialogue session; and
7 monitor at least one user's inputs to the system; and
8 a performance analyzer operatively coupled to the interaction controller for
9 analyzing the monitored inputs;
10 wherein the materials generated for at least one user are tailored to that user based
11 on the monitored inputs.

1 27. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a
2 subject, the system comprising:
3 an interaction controller configured to
4 set a duration of time for users to communicate;
5 start a dialogue session for users to communicate in an area related to the
6 subject;
7 stop the dialogue session approximately at or before the end of the
8 duration of time; and
9 monitor at least one user's inputs to the system; and

1 34. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 31 further
2 comprising the step of retrieving a summarized profile of the existing users for a potential
3 user to decide on joining the one or more existing users to work on the subject.

1 35. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 31 further
2 comprising the step of allowing a potential user to interact with the one or more existing
3 users in a dialogue session for a pre-determined period of time for determining whether
4 the potential user might join the existing users to work on the subject.

1 36. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 31 further comprising
2 the step of forbidding, in the future, an existing user from working on the subject with the
3 one or more other users.

1 37. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 36 wherein the step
2 of forbidding depends on recommendations from the one or more other users.

1 38. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 31 further
2 comprising the step of limiting a user's interaction to observing but not interacting in the
3 dialogue session.

1 39. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 31 further
2 comprising the step of suggesting a user to join another group of users to work on the
3 subject.

1 40. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a
2 subject, the system comprising:
3 a user registry for restricting the users who can use the system;
4 an interaction controller operatively coupled to the user registry, the controller
5 configured to

45. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 42 wherein the user-profile storage medium stores all of the users' communication in the dialogue session.

46. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 42 wherein the user-profile storage-medium is separated into a private and a public area, with the public area storing information that can be accessed by any person.

47. A computer-aided group-learning method recited in claim 5 further comprising the steps of:

analyzing the monitored inputs to generate a profile of one or more users; and
storing the one or more users' profile in a storage medium.

48. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a subject, the system comprising:

~~an interaction controller configured to
generate materials on the subject to communicate to the users for them to
work on the subject;~~

set a duration of time for users to communicate in a dialogue session; and
monitor at least one user's inputs to the system;

a performance analyzer operatively coupled to the interaction controller for analyzing the monitored inputs to generate a profile of one or more users; and
a user-profile storage medium for storing the one or more users' profile.

49. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a notepad for a user to take notes.

50. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 49 wherein the system is configured to allow the user to cut materials the user has received, and paste the materials in the notepad.

- 1 51. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 49 wherein the
2 system is configured to allow the user to link the notes taken to the materials received by
3 the user.
- 1 52. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 51 wherein the link is
2 from an area in the notes to a point in the materials.
- 1 53. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 49 wherein the
2 interaction controller guides the user to take notes.
- 1 54. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 53 wherein the
2 guidance depends on the user's inputs into the system.
- 1 55. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 4 further comprising
2 the step of allocating an area to allow a user to take notes.
- 1 56. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 55 further
2 comprising the step of guiding the user to take notes.
- 1 57. A computer-aided learning system comprising:
2 a notepad for a user to take notes while working on a subject through the system;
3 and
4 an interaction controller for generating materials on the subject for the user, and
5 for guiding the user to take notes.
- 1 58. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 57 wherein the system is
2 configured to allow the user to cut materials the user has received, and paste the materials
3 in the notepad.

- 1 59. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 57 wherein the system is
2 configured to allow the user to link the notes taken to the materials generated by the
3 generator on the subject.
- 1 60. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 59 wherein the link is
2 from an area in the notes to a point in the materials.
- 1 61. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 57 wherein:
2 the interaction controller is configured to monitor the user's inputs while the user
3 is working on the subject; and
4 the guidance depends on the monitored inputs.
- 1 62. A computer-aided learning method comprising the steps of:
2 generating materials on a subject for a user;
3 allocating an area for a user to take notes; and
4 guiding the user to take notes.

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